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RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0024  
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0526  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0303  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 1301  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 000615

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [MASS](#) [MOPS](#) [RW](#)  
SUBJECT: SHORTLEY MEETS SENIOR RWANDAN OFFICIALS

Classified By: CDA Cheryl Sim for Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

Summary  
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¶1. (C) In conversations with Senior Advisor for Conflict Resolution Tim Shortley, Rwandan officials agreed that CNDP forces should pull back from forward positions gained in last several days in eastern Congo. While denying any special links with Nkunda forces, they agreed to send messages to Congolese contacts regarding the need to lower tensions in the region. Rwandan officials also concurred that reducing the numbers of participants in Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) and Tripartite-Plus sessions could increase communication, cut down on posturing, and advance the peace process. A separate quiet channel of communications with the Congolese would also be useful, they agreed. On Rwanda's options for transferring the USG 30 million dollar donation of equipment to its forces in Darfur, the Rwandans opposed any effort to send the gear through Port Sudan, much preferring either airlift to Darfur or combined road and air transport by way of Uganda and southern Sudan. They expressed concern about UN support for the full deployment of four Rwandan battalions to Darfur, and would receive a UN technical group September 8-10 to discuss relevant issues. End summary.

Rwanda Will Help Lower Tensions in the Kivus  
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¶2. (C) In meetings September 5-6 with Senior Advisor Tim Shortley, Chief of Defense Staff General James Kabarebe, Director of Military Intelligence General Jack Musemakweli, Great Lakes Envoy Ambassador Richard Sezibera, and Internal Security Secretary General Ambassador Joseph Mutaboba, Rwandan officials agreed on the need to lessen tensions in the Kivus and urge a CNDP retreat from positions it had taken in the last several days in North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In a joint meeting September 5, Kabarebe and Musemakweli agreed to pass messages to the FARDC on the need to lower tensions, but contended that Rwanda had limited influence over the CNDP. Kabarebe noted that Rwanda had "its own problems to worry about" in building a better military, and he did not take keen interest in the many minor fluctuations of fortune in the Kivus, leaving his senior staff, especially Musemakweli to follow developments there. The RDF, according to Kabarebe, is fully occupied with security for the upcoming September 15 elections and Darfur deployment planning. "If the Congo does not intrude on our concerns, we do not get involved," added Musemakweli. Both men noted the propensity for rumors to flow uninterruptedly in Kinshasa, and for the DRC government to encourage rumors

that put Rwanda in a bad light. Each thought the intentions of the Congolese government in the Kivus were unclear, with the "military option" still attractive to President Kabila and his advisors. With specific regard to the FDLR, Kabarebe reiterated that the group poses no serious threat to Rwanda, but "if they poked their noses across the border" during this electoral period, the RDF was ready.

13. (C) Shortley described his recent trip to the DRC, including Goma, where rumors were running rampant concerning RDF troops and General Kabarebe entering the DRC to support QRDF troops and General Kabarebe entering the DRC to support the CNDP. Expressing concern about MONUC's role in spreading the rumors through its reporting mechanisms, Shortley noted that Embassy Kigali had helped squelch the Kabarebe rumor by pointing out the General had been present in Kigali as the Chair of the East Brigade Conference and had met with UN SRSG for the Great Lakes Doss the same evening. Shortley also shared with the two generals, "evidence" FARDC officers had given to him that they believed proved the RDF had forces in North Kivu. Both explained that individuals wearing jungle fatigues proved nothing, and added that through happen-stance, the customs authorities at the Kigali airport had found a shipment of fatigues destined for the DRC fatigues destined for the DRC - it was not clear for whom, however. Given the rumors flowing, Kabarebe agreed with Shortley's suggestion that speaking directly with his DRC counterpart would help clear @Qr/bQ#8m[QQoy in the scheduled rotations of Rwandan troops to Darfur this fall. The RDF had no equipment shortfalls (counting Dutch trucks and Chinese APCs enroute to Rwanda), and was anxious to see the thirty million dollar USG contribution of equipment sent to Darfur along with the four rotating battalions. However, said Nyamvumba, the RDF was worried that the UN was not fully committed to the deployment, for reasons not fully understood (budgetary? he wondered). For example, the UN was now saying that, rather than transfer four 800-man battalions, as Rwanda had planned and trained to do, Rwanda must swap its 680-man battalion in Darfur with a similarly-sized battalion. From a training and unit-cohesiveness perspective, this made no sense, he said. However, a UN team would arrive to assess Rwanda's readiness to deploy, and this would put into clearer focus the UN concerns, he noted (Note: RDF concerns about the UN visit lessened when the team arrived and began work). Nyamvumba hoped that Rwandan could transfer the USG equipment by a more direct route than Dar-es-Salaam to Port Sudan and then by road to Darfur. There was every reason to believe the Sudanese government would stop the equipment somewhere after Port Sudan (although he noted his surprise when the Sudanese recently released Rwandan equipment kept in El-Fashir for some time). Perhaps a combination of travel by road to Uganda and then air from southern Sudan could be employed for the equipment, he said.

Comment

Defense (CHOD) meeting planned for September 17-18 in Kinshasa, Kabarebe indicated he had not made up his mind to attend.

14. (C ) In a follow-up meeting on September 6, Musamekweli (who had participated in the September 1 Joint Monitoring Group Special Envoy's meeting in Kinshasa), the general told Shortley that he was confident Kabarebe would reach out to his FARDC counterpart. On the CHOD, Musamekweli stated he would participate in the September 15-16 pre-meetings and believed Kabarebe would attend as long as the DRC guaranteed his safety. Shortley noted that overnight a new rumor emerged out of Tanzania that purported the CNDP was seeking an independent "East Congo." Musamekweli said he had not heard that, but said it did not make sense that the CNDP would issue something out of Tanzania and noted that the rumor was likely just one more in the current DRC-rumor campaign.

15. (C) In a later joint meeting with Sezibera and Mutaboba, the two men agreed that a U.S. initiated back channel to Kinshasa could be useful, if the right personality were found to conduct the communications. They also agreed that a

reduction in the numbers of persons participating in multi-lateral and bilateral exchanges, such as the JMG and Tripartite-Plus sessions, could mean franker discussions, less posturing, and greater cooperation. They wondered if the upcoming JMG and Tripartite-Plus sessions could be combined or linked in some manner in November, with restricted participation, and open and closed sessions. A continuing problem, in seeking to hold these various meetings and make progress, they said, was the willingness of the Congolese government to engage in "disinformation." "They do it as a habit," said Sezibera, commenting on the MONUC report that General Kabarebe had addressed CNDP cadres in North Kivu. "Someone has to tell Kinshasa that we are not the puppet masters" for the eastern Congo," he added.

16. (C) The two men also cautioned that President Kabila's commitment to a political solution in the Kivus, with the disarmament of the negative forces, was not at all clear. FARDC units were not led by those formally in command, but by operatives in direct communication with Kinshasa. Ties between the FARDC and the FDLR continued. The government's willingness to truly reform the military was always in doubt. But the GOR would continue to participate in the search for peace, and seek useful understandings with the Congolese government. "Our own problems fully occupy us," said Sezibera, "but we engage with them."

Rwanda Ready to Deploy, Prefers Direct Route to Darfur for New Gear

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17. (C) General Patrick Nyamvumba, logistics chief for the RDF, said that his forces were ready to deploy in the scheduled rotations of Rwandan troops to Darfur this fall. The RDF had no equipment shortfalls (counting Dutch trucks and Chinese APCs enroute to Rwanda), and was anxious to see the thirty million dollar USG contribution of equipment sent to Darfur along with the four rotating battalions. However, said Nyamvumba, the RDF was worried that the UN was not fully committed to the deployment, for reasons not fully understood (budgetary? he wondered). For example, the UN was now saying that, rather than transfer four 800-man battalions, as Rwanda had planned and trained to do, Rwanda must swap its 680-man battalion in Darfur with a similarly-sized battalion. From a training and unit-cohesiveness perspective, this made no sense, he said. However, a UN team would arrive to assess Rwanda's readiness to deploy, and this would put into clearer focus the UN concerns, he noted (Note: RDF concerns about the UN visit lessened when the team arrived and began work). Nyamvumba hoped that Rwandan could transfer the USG equipment by a more direct route than Dar-es-Salaam to Port Sudan and then by road to Darfur. There was every reason to believe the Sudanese government would stop the equipment somewhere after Port Sudan (although he noted his surprise when the Sudanese recently released Rwandan equipment kept in El-Fashir for some time). Perhaps a combination of travel by road to Uganda and then air from southern Sudan could be employed for the equipment, he said.

Comment

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18. (C) While the Rwandans seemed relaxed and unconcerned by recent developments in the Congo, General Kabarebe's feigned lack of interest may be a bit of bravado; they are following events closely. However, they remain committed to the JMG and Tripartite-Plus processes (slimmed down), with a possible U.S. back channel route to more fruitful discussions. On Darfur, the Rwandans hope for a more effective route for peacekeeping equipment, equipment they believe they will employ to very good use. End comment.

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